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DALTON-IN-FURNESS

Urban Sanitary District



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR

THE YEAR 1899.

DALTON-IN-FURNESS

P. BUCK, PRINTER, BOOKBINDER, AND STATIONER

1900.





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### **Medical Officer of Health.**

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**Dalton-in-Furness Urban District—1899.**

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*To the Chairman and Members of the Dalton-in-Furness Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,—

By order of the Local Government Board every Medical Officer of Health is required to make an Annual Report which shall deal with those conditions which may affect the health of his District, and with the means of improving the same.

AREA OF DISTRICT      ...      ...      ...      7,223 acres.

RATEABLE VALUE (Poor Rate)—(1898)	£89,033 0s. 0d.
"      "      "      (1899)	£95,086 2s. 6d.

INHABITED HOUSES.—(1891) 2,597 ; (1898) 2,659 ; (1899) 2,660.

POPULATION ENUMERATED.—(1891) 13,300.

INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.—The District is subject to systematic inspection, and every care is exercised to discover defects which may have a prejudicial effect upon the health of the community.

**SANITARY CONDITION AND PROGRESS.—WATER SUPPLY.**—In spite of the very dry summer, there was no scarcity of water in any part of the District within the radius of the mains, and comparatively few complaints have been received as to the quality of the water supplied, indeed, it may be stated, that as a general rule the quality of the water for all domestic purposes is above suspicion.

The Undertakers, no doubt, with a view to providing for an increased consumption in the Borough of Barrow have constructed a new reservoir at Harlock, which was opened in the summer. The increased storage thus provided, should be sufficient to ensure the District against any scarcity for some years.

There are, however, several groups of houses outside the radius of the existing mains, and in these parts of your District the want of a proper supply of water was severely felt during the prolonged summer drought.

The provision of an adequate supply to such dwellings, has been, and is still, engaging the attention of the Council, who I feel quite sure will use their best endeavours to provide a remedy for this long felt want.

**NEW STREETS.**—Plans and estimates are being prepared, with a view to applying for a loan to metal, kerb and channel, the whole of the streets in the District which have not yet been completed.

**SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.**—It will be remembered that in my last Annual Report I mentioned that a new sewer was in course of construction on the North side of Ulverston Road. This has been completed, and drain connections to the houses made, except to those in Lord Street, the delay, in this instance, being due to some difficulty in completing the necessary arrangements with the owner of the adjoining land. I hope the Council will push forward the negotiations in order that the houses in Lord Street may be connected, as the present condition of this property is most insanitary, to say nothing of the discredit which it reflects upon the Authority.

On account of the faulty construction of the sewer in Back Cobden Street (North) orders have been given for this to be relaid.

A new 9 inch sewer has been laid at Court No. 1, Castle Street, and house connections made. Ventilators have been erected at the head of this sewer, and also at the head of the one in Back Rawlinson Street (North).

The Dalton main outfall having been found to be full of deposit, owing to an insufficiency of fall, has been relaid.

Orders have been given for the sewers to be ventilated by shafts at various elevated positions, and a portable tank is to be obtained, in order that the sewers may be more efficiently flushed.

During the dry summer weather, Butts Beck, which for some time has been little better than an open sewer, was cleaned out throughout its course in the town, its course straightened, and its level lowered.

Many house drains, which were found to discharge into the beck, were connected with the sewer.

Coming to Askam, I find that the outfall has been extended into the Duddon Estuary, and it is hoped that this will serve to remedy a nuisance which was always said to exist at the old outfall.

In Back Duke Street, a 9 inch sewer has been laid, and houses which discharged into the storm water sewer have been connected. A 9 inch sewer has been laid on the Lots, at Sea View.

NEWTON SEWERAGE.—The Surveyor has this work in hand, and he assures me we shall be in a position to chant our "Nunc Dimittis" very shortly.

HOUSE DRAINAGE.—A great deal of sanitary work has been done in this connection, and house drains have been remodelled. The necessity for this, in many cases has been great, no thought having apparently been given to this important branch of house construction a few years ago, proving the absolute necessity for having all newly laid drains thoroughly tested, by the Authority.

A good deal of trouble has been caused by the subsidence of the Lindal Main Sewer, due to mining operations in the vicinity.

THE SEWERS GENERALLY.—From a very able, and exhaustive, report upon the sewers of the District compiled by your Surveyor, it would appear that those in Dalton are by no means what they should be, for although it seems to have been the original intention of those in Authority, at the time, to sewer the town on the Separate System, any benefit which might have been derived from this has been neutralised by the bungling manner in which house connections have been made, these in some instances having been connected with the storm water sewer, and in many cases the storm water drains have been connected with the sewage sewer.

Another fault in construction is that almost invariably the down-runners at the backs of the houses, which I presume discharge into the drains, are directly connected with the same, and act as ventilators, a plan which is open to serious condemnation, and should not be allowed in the future.

INCREMENT AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.—Extra attention has been given to this work, additional men and horses having been employed. In the year 1897—5257 ashpits were emptied; in the year 1898—5201 ashpits emptied; in the year 1899—5400 ashpits emptied. Still I think the work anything but satisfactory, as I feel strongly that the accumulation of refuse, especially excreta, in the neighbourhood of dwellings, must be prejudicial to the health of the public, and it is satisfactory that in this view I have the entire support of the Health Committee of the Council, who have now under consideration the question of making more adequate provision for the scavenging of the whole district.

COMMON LODGING HOUSE.—There is one Common Lodging House in your District, viz, at Dalton and this is kept under pretty close supervision, but in spite of this, your Inspector informs me that he has very great difficulty in impressing upon the Proprietor the necessity of carrying out the Regulations.

I have recently made an inspection of the house, in company with your Inspector, and it is my intention to report upon the same to the Health Committee.



## VITAL STATISTICS.

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POPULATION.—When the population of the District was enumerated in 1891 it was found to be 13,300, residing in 2,597 houses, an average per house of 5.1 persons. As the area of the District is 7,223 acres, the average per acre will be 1.45 persons. In a little more than twelve months' the census will again be taken, and I should imagine that there will be some slight increase in the population, especially will this be so, if emigration for south Africa has not again set in, however, I am basing my calculations upon the population as enumerated in 1891.

### DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION.—

			Males.	Females.	Total.
Dalton and Newton	...	...	4,616	4,528	9,144
Lindal and Marton	...	...	534	487	1,021
Askam and Ireleth	...	...	1,652	1,483	3,135
Totals	...	...	6,802	6,498	13,300

BIRTHS.—The births registered during the past year have numbered 384, or 28.8 per 1,000, as against 424 or 31.8 per 1,000 in the year 1898.

			1899.	1898.
In the first quarter of the year there were	...	...	81	102
„ second „	„	„	105	109
„ third „	„	„	100	123
„ fourth „	„	„	98	90
Totals	...	...	384	424

Distributed according to the parts of the District in which they occurred, the births and birth-rates are as follows :—

		1899	Rate per 1,000	1898	Rate per 1,000
Dalton and Newton	...	252	26.4	283	30.9
Lindal and Marton	...	18	17.6	25	24.4
Askam and Ireleth	...	114	36.3	116	37.0
		384		424	



From the above it will be observed that there has been a decrease in the number of Births, which has affected all parts of the District.

MALE AND FEMALE BIRTHS.—There have been 198 male children born, and 186 females.

DEATHS.—From the Registrar's returns, I find that 205 deaths have been recorded during the past year, giving a death-rate of 15.4 per 1,000. The deaths registered during the year 1898 numbered 201 or 15.1 per 1,000.

The deaths have been distributed, according to the various parts of the District in which they occurred, as follows—

	1899	Rate per 1,000	1898	Rate per 1,000
Dalton and Newton ...	157	17.1	137	14.9
Lindal and Marton ...	12	11.7	14	13.6
Askam and Ireleth ...	36	11.4	50	15.9
	<hr/> 205		<hr/> 201	

From this table it will be seen that the number of deaths in Dalton has considerably increased, whereas in the Askam and Ireleth, and Lindal and Marton Districts there is a decrease.

There have been 110 deaths in males and 95 in females.

Calculated for the four quarters of the year they were as follows—

	1899.	1898.
For the first quarter ...	56	69
„ second „ ...	42	58
„ third „ ...	56	38
„ fourth „ ...	51	36
Totals ...	<hr/> 205	<hr/> 201

DISEASES OF THE RESPIRATORY ORGANS.—This class includes Bronchitis, Pneumonia, Pleurisy, and Phthisis (Pulmonary Consumption)

There have been fifty-two deaths from diseases of this type, compared with forty recorded in the year 1898, forty-five of these have been due to Bronchitis, Pneumonia, or Pleurisy, and seven to Phthisis.

The death-rate from Phthisis is equal to 3.4 per cent. of the deaths from all causes, the death-rate from respiratory diseases generally being equal to 25.3 per cent.

INFANTILE AND SENILE MORTALITY.—Eighty-one deaths have been recorded in infants under one year old, as against fifty-one in the year 1898, the infantile mortality being equal to 210·9 per 1,000 births, which means at this rate that out of every 1000 children born nearly 211 will fail to battle through the first year of life, a very high rate. The chief cause of this high infantily mortality is the large number of infants who died from Diarrhœa in the summer, viz., 23, whereas in 1898 there were only three deaths from the same cause.

In persons over sixty-five years of age there have been thirty-five deaths.

ZYMOTIC DEATH RATE.—I find that there have been thirty-three deaths from diseases classed under this heading, and I have tabulated them hereunder.

	1899.	1898.
Diphtheria ... ..	3	3
Typhoid Fever ... ..	5	1
Whooping Cough ... ..	1	0
Diarrhœa ... ..	23	3
Measles ... ..	0	1
Scarlet Fever ... ..	1	1
Totals ... ..	33	9

From the foregoing table it will be observed that the chief increase is due to Diarrhœa (Infantile), which was prevalent in an epidemic form in the summer.

The death-rate from Zymotic Diseases is equal to 2·4 per 1,000, whereas in the year 1898 it was only ·68 per 1,000.

I give below a table showing the distribution of the deaths from Zymotic Diseases.

	Dalton and Newton.	Lindal and Marton.	Askam and Ireleth.	Totals.
Diphtheria ... ..	2	1	—	3
Typhoid Fever ... ..	4	—	1	5
Whooping Cough ... ..	1	—	—	1
Diarrhœa ... ..	19	—	4	23
Measles ... ..	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever ... ..	—	1	—	1
Total ... ..	26	2	5	33
Rate per 1,000 ... ..	2·8	1·9	1·5	2·4

The following certificates notifying cases of Infectious Disease have been received during the year.

	1899.	1898.
Scarlet Fever ... ..	57	13
Typhoid Fever ... ..	27	19
Diphtheria ... ..	6	6
Erysipelas ... ..	16	7
Puerperal Fever ... ..	—	—
Small Pox ... ..	—	—
	<u>106</u>	<u>45</u>

These certificates were handed in from the different parts of the District as under:—

	Scarlet Fever.	Typhoid Fever.	Diphtheria.	Erysipelas	Totals.
Dalton and Newton...	51	22	4	16	93
Lindal and Marton ...	3	—	2	—	5
Askam and Ireleth ...	3	5	—	—	8
Totals ... ..	57	27	6	16	106

THE SANATORIUM.—In speaking of Infectious Diseases, it may not be amiss to mention this Institution, which commenced its operations under the auspices of the Joint Hospital Board early in the year, and I think has fully justified its existance so far as your District is concerned, ten cases of Typhoid Fever and seven of Scarlet Fever having been treated in the same without a death.

TYPHOID FEVER.—I will follow upon my usual custom by giving, in tabular form, a result of the examination of the premises where this disease was found to exist.

	No. of Cases.	Remarks.
JANUARY.		
Duddon Road, Askam ...	1	Imported.
FEBRUARY.		
Rawlinson St., Dalton ...	1	Deep open privy-midden, three other cases occurred in this house in March.
MARCH.		
Ireleth ... ..	1	Large open privy-midden, very filthy.
Ulverston Road, Dalton ...	1	House provided with W.C.'s, no defects.
Porter St., Dalton...	1	" " " "
JUNE.		
Market Place, Dalton ...	2	Privy midden.
Sharp St., Askam...	1	Imported.
JULY.		
Queen St., Dalton ...	1	Defective drains.
Market St., Dalton ...	1	Privy midden.
AUGUST.		
Duke St., Askam ...	1	No defects apparent
Queen St., Dalton ...	1	Defective drainage
Chapel St., Dalton ...	1	Large privy-midden, standing on high ground above house.
Queen St., Dalton ...	1	No defects.
Cleator St., Dalton ...	1	Privy-midden.
Chapel St., Dalton ...	1	Privy-midden, previous case in house.
OCTOBER.		
Ainslie St., Dalton ...	1	No defects.
NOVEMBER.		
Market St., Dalton ...	1	Privy-midden.
Cobden St., Dalton ...	1	Large Privy-midden adjoining back kitchen.
Cleator St., Dalton ...	1	No defects apparent.
DECEMBER.		
Chapel St., Dalton ...	1	Privy-midden.
Cleator St., Dalton ...	1	No defects, previous case in house.

In my last Annual Report I ventured to express the opinion that we were entering upon better times so far as the prevalence, in the District, of this disease was concerned, but the increase in the number of cases notified makes it appear that this expression of opinion was premature. The position of a health officer is anything but a pleasant one in the presence of the continued prevalence of a disease such as the one to which I am now referring, as Medical Officer of Health, he is expected to keep his District in a condition of healthiness, yet it is not healthy, and he is, liable, by those who will not reason, to be blamed accordingly.

Many of the Members of the Council, must be fully aware, that in almost every Annual Report which I have written, for a period now extending over fourteen years, I have condemned the privy-midden system, and recommended conversion into W.C.'s, and undoubtedly a great deal of work has been done in this connection, but much still remains to be done. The fact that such structures should not only exist in our midst, but should be clung to with such tenacity, is, to my mind, a great blot upon our sanitary administration.

There may be those who will say " Why should the privy-midden be abolished ? " For an answer to this question, I will ask you to refer to my Reports, in which I have repeatedly stated that soil pollution in the vicinity of dwellings, and especially pollution due to human excrement, plays a very important part in the production of Typhoid Fever, and the arrangement of most of the houses in this District lends itself, in a special manner, to this pollution.

The plan, in many cases, has been as follows, the ground upon which the house stands, falls from the privy, (with uncovered ashpit) to the dwelling itself, moreover, the privy is oftentimes built immediately adjoining the back-kitchen, the floor of the ashpit is below the ground level and not rendered impervious, and the same obtains as regards the dwelling itself, no care having been taken to render the foundations impervious to either ground air or moisture. The privy in time is bound to become charged with moisture, much of this being surface water, this must find its way somewhere, and the only direction in which it can travel is towards the foundations of the house which sooner or later become saturated with filth. If we imagine that to this filth is occasionally added the specific microbe of Typhoid Fever then we have an easy explanation for many of the cases which occur, and, for the origin of which to a superficial observer there would appear to be no sufficient explanation.

It is noteworthy that a majority of the cases of Typhoid Fever which have been reported for the last few years have occurred in a part of the District where these conditions particularly obtain, which would appear to bear out my argument as to the cause.

The Medical Officer of Health for Nottingham (Dr. Boobyer) has published the following striking statistics relating to the incidence of Typhoid Fever on houses of different classes. These are briefly as follows—

Houses with,	Proportion of cases of Typhoid to houses.				
Privy-middens, ...	...	...	...	...	1 in 37
Pail Closets ...	...	...	...	...	1 in 120
Water Closets ...	...	...	...	...	1 in 558

These figures are remarkable, and I hope they will add weight to what I have said upon the subject.

SCARLET FEVER.—It will be seen from the table of infectious diseases that 57 cases of Scarlet Fever have been reported as against 13 in the year 1898, and to such an extent did the disease prevail in December, and so obviously did school attendance appear to affect the spread of infection, that I was induced to ask the Managers of the various elementary schools to anticipate the Christmas holidays by closing a week earlier. During the holidays the result of this action appeared to be satisfactory, but it is too early, yet, after the re-opening of the schools to speak with any certainty.

DIPHTHERIA.—With one exception the outbreak of this disease was found to be associated with serious sanitary defects.

I have in conclusion to express my best thanks to your Surveyor and Inspector for their valuable co-operation and assistance.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

G. H. PATTERSON,

L.R.C.P. LOND., M.R.C.S. Eng., D.P.H. LOND.

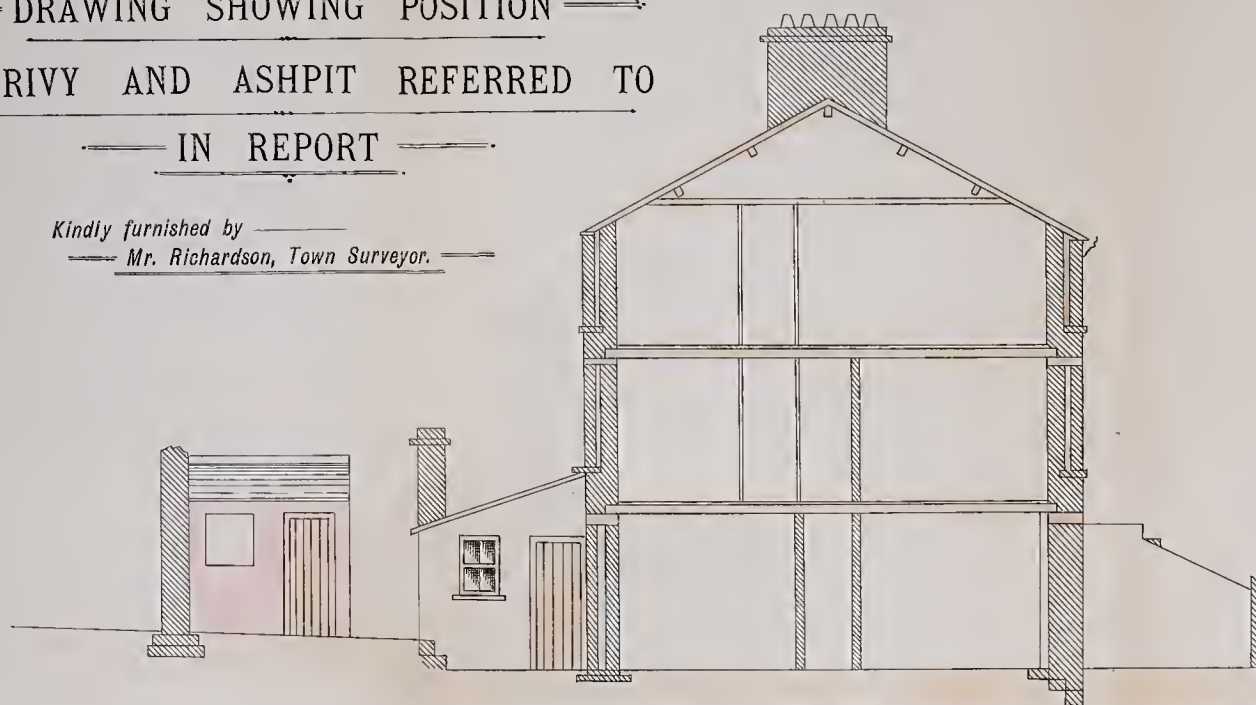
*Medical Officer of Health.*

*February 5th, 1900.*

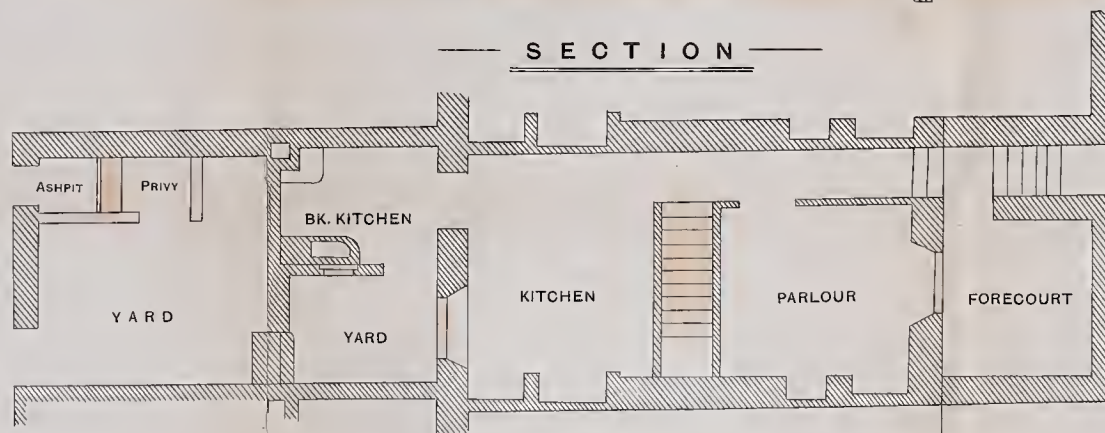


— DRAWING SHOWING POSITION —  
 OF PRIVY AND ASHPIT REFERRED TO  
 — IN REPORT —

Kindly furnished by —  
 — Mr. Richardson, Town Surveyor. —



— SECTION —



— PLAN —

— Scale:— 8 feet to an inch —



